



The OSCILLATOR

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Oregon Tualatin Valley Amateur Radio Club



"MY TWO CENTS"

Pat Roberson

I hope you had a great Thanksgiving, survived the relatives, and didn't overstuff. Besides June (Sea-Pac & Field Day) this is my favorite time of year, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Carl Clawson WS7L has reported his willingness to coordinate an Extra Class upgrade series! Thanks Carl. Dates for both General and Extra upgrade series will be posted soon.

I think there may be some interest in a project night? We would need to someone to head that up and find a place to hold it. I'm sure it would be worth it.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the annual Holiday Dinner meeting on Thursday, December 8th. Note the date is different than our usual meeting due to availability of the room.

73,
Pat Roberson KA7PAT
President, OTVARC

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Regular Membership \$20.00
Family Membership \$5.00

Complete Renewal Form
Check Payable to OTVARCS

Send to Club Address

DX-PEDITIONS

Part 3: Berg-Benson DXpedition to Belize

Joe Kelly N7BF has prepared a series of articles on DX-peditions. The series will run monthly.

OTVARC's sole entry into the world of DXpeditions was made in 1983 by members Al Berg and Sue Benson. Al and Sue joined four other hams on a DXpedition to coastal Belize in Central America. The specific area in Belize was Ambergris Cay which is the largest island off Belize.

The group included our two Oregon hams, two hams from California, and one each from Texas and Virginia. Al was invited by one of the California hams and then announced that there was one more opening. Sue Benson took it. They formed a small "ham net" to discuss and plan the trip.

The team met in Houston for a flight to the Belize mainland, followed by a "commuter flight" to the island. Once on the island all transportation was by boat as roads between the two spotter's location and the four HF stations was non-existent.

Getting all of the equipment to the site was a real challenge. The team had 10 HTs, 4 HF rigs, 3 amps, 5 vertical and 3 beam antennas, over 8,500 ft. of coax and wire, 8 cameras, 62 rolls of film, etc., etc. The total weight of the "stuff" came to over 1,800 lbs.!!

See DX-peditions, Page 4

CLUB MONTHLY MEETING

The Annual Holiday Dinner is our December Club Meeting. It will be held on Thursday, December 8th at Community Building, Sunset Presbyterian Church, 14986 NW Cornell Rd, just off US 26 (Exit 65) in Beaverton. The Meeting begins at 7:00 pm.

The Holiday Dinner is underwritten for Club Members plus 1. The cost per person is just \$10.00. Your reservation must be in by December 3. The form is on the web at otvarc.org.

OTVARC is affiliated with ARRL: The National Association for Amateur Radio and is a Special Service Club. Check out the map at: tinyurl.com/otvarc-site

RESERVATIONS DUE DECEMBER 3rd:

**2012 HOLIDAY DINNER
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8TH
SUNSET PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

Tenderloin or Salmon Dinner

All members +1 welcome
\$10.00 per person

Reservation Form at
www.otvarc.org

THE SOLTICE DECEMBER 21

The December solstice will occur at 05:30 UTC on December 22, 2011. That will be Wednesday, December 21st at 9:30 PM PST. It is also known as the winter solstice in the northern hemisphere and the summer solstice in the southern hemisphere due to seasonal differences.

The December solstice occurs when the sun reaches its most southerly declination of -23.5 degrees. In other words, it is when the North Pole is tilted 23.5 degrees away from the sun. Depending on the calendar, the December solstice occurs annually on a day between December 20 and December 23. On this date, all places above a latitude of 66.5 degrees north are in darkness, while locations below a latitude of 66.5 degrees south receive 24 hours of daylight.

The sun is directly overhead on the Tropic of Capricorn in the southern hemisphere during the December solstice. It marks the longest day of the year in terms of daylight hours for those living south of the Tropic of Capricorn. Those living or travelling south from the Antarctic Circle towards the South Pole will see the midnight sun during this time of the year.

An observer in the northern hemisphere marks the day of the year with the least hours of daylight on the December solstice. Those living north of the Arctic Circle will not be able to see the sun during this time of the year.

Thanks, timeanddate.com

ELECTION COMMITTEE

Elections for Board positions will be held in April, 2012. Newly elected Officers and Trustees will be installed at our Annual Meeting, May 17, 2012. The Board has appointed Warren Winner, Treasurer, to serve as our Elections Committee Chair.

At least two members of the club who are not on the Board will be joining him. If you are considering a run for club office, make your interest known to Warren and the Elections Committee. We will elect all four officers and three trustees to the Board. Will you be a candidate for club leadership?

J6 DX-PEDITION DECEMBER 4 - 12

Joe Kelly N7BF will be one of The "Buddies in the Caribbean" DXpedition group operating from St Lucia on December 4 - 12, 2011. "The Buddies" will be using 100-watt or less low power radios and the Buddipole portable antenna systems.

The DXpedition is being led by Buddipole creator Budd Drummond W3FF. He is joined by Guy Hamblen N7UN, who serves as coordinator for these events. In addition to Joe N7BF, the team of operators includes David WD9CMD, Steve WF2S, Tom K9CJM, Bill AA4OC, and Barclay WU1B. The group expects to be active in the ARRL 10 Meter Contest December 10-11th. They will use the callsign J68UN.

QSL via LoTW, eQSL, and/or postal mail to the operator's home callsign (SASE required). For more details, see the following web site:

<http://suitcasedxpedititions.com>.

SKN

Straight Key Night is a 24-hour event, a day dedicated to celebrating our CW heritage. Participants are encouraged to get on the air and simply make enjoyable, conversational CW QSOs. The use of straight keys or bugs to send CW is preferred. There are no points scored and all who participate are winners. Straight Key Night is held every January 1 from 0000 UTC through 2359 UTC (Saturday, December 31 at 4:00 pm PST to Sunday, January 1, 2012 at 3:59 pm PST).

Dan Henderson N1ND says, "So each year from 0000 UTC to 2359 UTC PM January 1st I have the chance to pay a small bit of homage back to the Elmers when I have the opportunity to participate in the annual ARRL Straight Key Night.

In the decade since I wrote my first SKN announcement for QST, I have seen marvelous metamorphosis occur. The number of entries has grown almost ever year, even with the elimination of CW as a licensing requirement in the US. After SKN, send the Contest Branch a list of stations worked.

W7TVC IN THE CQ WORLD WIDE CONTEST

Amidst the emerging fall colors atop the hills west of Dallas Oregon, members of our OTVARC affiliated contest group, *Tualatin Valley Contesters*, gathered the weekend of October 28th to 30th to activate contest club call sign W7TVC. The purpose was to compete for our fifth year in the CQ magazine sponsored World Wide DX Contest.

Once again Mike Fuller K7CIE and YL Emily hosted the event at their residence on Oakdale Road. This year for the first time the Fullers are full time residents at their Dallas QTH, having sold their Aloha home and begun construction on a long awaited dream retirement home.

The contest started at 5:00 PM Friday evening and ended at 5:00 PM Sunday evening. Operating as "Multi-Single", with one main transceiver and multiple operators to share the effort, each year the group does battle against past performance and the propagation conditions available.

This year for the first time we took advantage of the contest rules which allow one "multiplier" station in addition to a "run" or "search and pounce" station. This can add greatly to a team final score as QSO contact points are multiplied by the total number of DX entities (countries) plus CQ zone "multipliers", for each band.

Our advanced team of Mike K7CIE, Ron KD7VIK, Rob W7GH and Everett W6ABM had the first station ready to go at the appointed time and quickly found that 10 meters was wide open and busy. This was a big change from past years when a contact on that band was rare indeed. As the evening advanced good QSO rates were available as we moved up from 10 to 15 meters and then 20 meters.

Dave W8NF arrived late Friday for our first reinforcement. Overnight operation eventually shifted to the 40 and 80 meter bands. An occasional check of the 160 meter band gave one contact for a needed "double-mult", adding to our growing score. The QSO rate was slow, but some important DX and zone multipliers were logged.

Early Saturday morning, "grey-line propagation" kept 40 open long enough for the 20 meter band to wake-up and our very low over-night QSO rate picked up. Before long we were back pounding away on 10 meters again as well.

By mid-morning Saturday an additional vertical antenna was up and ready for the multiplier

station, but logging program and networking issues (who knew an IP address can change on you?) slowed things down for a while. Around noon we had the second station ready and on-the-air. Our multiplier count started to climb faster as did our score!

Over-night operation takes a toll on the most determined group so as Saturday afternoon rolled around the advance team was looking a little wilted. Reinforcements were on the way and soon Carl, WS7L, Joe, N7BF and Steve, AD7OG were on hand to continue the battle. At the half-way point it was apparent our final score would be well above that for 2010.

Saturday evening propagation followed the pattern seen Friday night, but by now enough stations were already in the log so there was an increase in "duplicates" heard, on all the bands. Despite the thinner available field both the S&P and multiplier station kept up a good pace until the wee-hours. Rob, W7GH bagged three more 160 meter contacts over-night as well.

By mid-morning Sunday we could see that this year would definitely be our best to date. Not only was the effect of the multipliers shooting our score thru the roof, we had worked a lot of rare DX, many in areas never worked by the W7TVC group before.

Exotic DX logged included places like Tunisia, Bhutan, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Andorra, Morocco, Moldova, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cyprus, Iceland, Market reef, and Ascension Island to name but a few. Not to mention the many more "common", (but for every new ham exciting) contacts with Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand, Caribbean and Pacific Islands galore that all make "working-the-world" an activity to look forward to every year.

Sunday afternoon found the team speculating about our final score. Soon the 500,000 point mark was passed, followed by 600,000, then 700,000 points. Considering that our previous best was just shy of 400,000 points there was a lot of excitement and speculation from a tired bunch of operators. Our final contact was logged at the top of the hour, within seconds of 00:00 UTC.

See CQ, Page 4

WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION



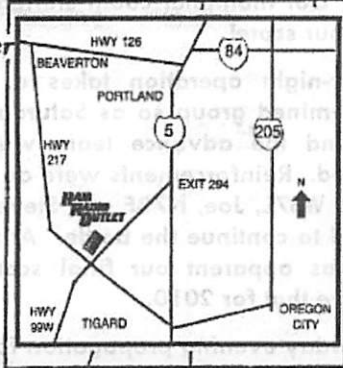
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CQ, from Page 3

In the end we more than doubled our 2010 score with a total score of 820,680 points. A total of 704 QSO's were completed for 1,954 QSO points and 127 DX plus 293 zone multipliers. More than 200 contacts each were made on the 10 and 15 meter bands, with 20 meters in third place with 167. An overall average rate of just over four minutes per contact had been maintained.

Our current solar cycle is well on the way to providing some outstanding conditions, whether you're a Technician, General or Extra Class operator. What are you waiting for? The world is waiting to hear from you! Good DX to you all.

Ron O'Connor KD7VIK

DECEMBER SPORADIC E

Sporadic E/E_s is an unusual form of radio propagation using characteristics of the Earth's ionosphere. Sporadic E propagation bounces signals off smaller "clouds" of ionized atmospheric gas in the lower E region (located at altitudes of 55 to 100 miles). Sporadic E activity peaks predictably in the summertime in both hemispheres. A smaller peak is seen around the winter solstice, in mid-December with the days after Christmas being the most active period.

DXpedition, from Page 1

A team member knew an exec on the airline they used and he provided them with a letter that allowed for free excess baggage. However at the airport the loading agents said "...that's not excess baggage that's freight!" So out came the wallets. Once in Belize the equipment had to be sent to the island in stages. Once in Belize the HF gear had to be transported by boat.

The resort used by the HF crew was owned by a ham operator. He had several permanent towers installed. He generously allowed the team to use them, as well as to install some of their antennas on the towers. The team tried to raise an antenna affixed to galvanized pipe and the weight-loading was too much. The mast snapped. A redesigned mast was made and it held up.

The two spotters stayed at Ramon's Reef Resort and the four HF operators went up coast to another resort. In the 35mm slides that Al Berg shared with me, both resorts looked like nice places, being right on the water (great antenna sites by salt water). Al recalled that at Ramon's Resort he paid \$42/day and that included lunch and dinner. Ramon's is still operating so I checked the rates and they are now \$150 to \$480, however the resort looks more upscale then when Al and Sue were there. Al said the whole trip cost him about \$900 1983 dollars, equivalent is about \$2,050 in 2011 dollars.

When not operating team members enjoyed a cool "807", and an occasional swim. Since the resort staff dumped fish entrails and left over fish into the water, there were resident moray eels and sharks close to shore and under the piers. Al avoided eels and sharks, but fell victim to the "no see-ums" and sand fleas as he walked about. He said his ankles looked pretty bad by the time he left. The resort area was beautiful with white sand beaches and clear blue water. The team made plenty of QSOs (logging in 12 to 14 per minute) in the CQ Worldwide Contest and in general enjoyed the adventure of a DXpedition. I asked Al if he would do the same trip again. Without hesitation he said "yes," but he added that he would do it differently and with a new team.

HAMFESTS & CONVENTIONS

18 February 18, 2012
Salem Hamfair & Computer Swap
Polk County Fairgrounds
Rickreall, Oregon
www.w7sra.com

20 - 22, APRIL 2012
63rd Annual Int'l DX Convention
Southern California DX Club
The Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center
Visalia, California
The Hotel is accepting reservations NOW
Online Convention Registration Opens
Monday January 17, 2012
www.dxconvention.org/index.html

1 - 3 JUNE 2012
30TH ANNUAL SEA-PAC CONVENTION
NW Division ARRL Convention
Seaside Convention Center
Seaside Oregon
Online Registration Open In January
www.seapac.org
C. Wayne Schuler AI9Q
16414 NE 21st Street
Vancouver, WA 98684
360-892-5580
ai9q@arrrl.net

3 - 5 August 3-5, 2012
57th Annual Pacific NW DX Conv
Monarch Hotel
Clackamas, Oregon
Willamette Valley DX Club
wvdx.org/dotnetnuke

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HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAY

2	Bert Schmidt	W7JWG
6	Phil Kane	K2ASP
6	Pat Griffiths	KA7UFG
9	Roland West	K7MCK
13	Richard Ballard	W7AND
15	Alan Bach	KF7GNM
15	Ardyth Graham	KE7ZRJ
17	Peter Hardiman	N7DUC
17	Bill Conwell	K2PO
19	Stan Griffiths	W7NI
19	Pete Thunem	WA7JBG
21	Morris Robertson	KF7NUO
26	Kathleen Haupt	KE7EVV
27	Rox Heath	AD7RX
27	Floyd Ragner	N7ONQ
28	Ken Nordling	W7EZE
31	Richard Bixler	WA7DKF

DECEMBER LUNCH BUNCH

Saturday December 17th
at 1:30 PM
AT

Peppermill Restaurant
17455 SW Farmington Rd
Aloha, Or 97007
503.642.5193

Talk In: 147.54 MHz Simplex

Questions? Linda KC7YTD
kc7ytd@gmail.com

CLUB FREQUENCIES

Simplex: 147.54 MHz
Repeaters: 146.96 MHz (Goat Mtn)
223.94 MHz (Goat Mtn)
440.25 MHz (Goat Mtn)

FIFTH WEDNESDAY CONTEST

In 2012, we will have four opportunities to try out our VHF simplex skills with Fifth Wednesday Contests. They will be held in February (on leap day); May; August; and, October. Invite your friends to join us on 147.54 MHz on each fifth Wednesday night.

HOLIDAY DINNER
CLUB MEETING
DECEMBER 8TH

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